

Inheemse Plant Kermis
Indigenous Plant Fair
Our annual Autumn
Sale of Indigenous Plants

Saturday 3rd April - 8 to 12

Under the Oaks in the Botanical Garden, Caledon Street,
George

Plants you won't find anywhere else - Proteas, species and hybrids - Ericas / Heide
- many shrubs & trees - a wide range of bedding & herbaceous plants - Succulents
/ Vetplante - Bulbs - Traditional medicinal plants



Teas, Bookshop, Advice



This event is organised for us each year by Ena McIntyre, as Chairperson of the
Garden Route Branch of the Botanical Society of South Africa, and has become
one of the highlights of the local gardening scene, not to be missed

Advance notice

Wildflower Show 2004 Veldblomme Skou

At the Moriarty Environmental Centre

Opening by invitation 14th

15th to 17th October open to Public - Schools day 18th

JAYNE HARRINGTON WRITES:

I started working in the office at the beginning of December 2004, a supposedly quiet period, where I would be able to peruse at leisure, various files that would make me fully conversant on all the different aspects of the Garden and the Herbarium.

Many "Friends" would, I am sure, also have been under the impression that with the holiday period in full swing, the pace at the Garden would slow down considerably, and moving into the New Year would be done at a leisurely pace. I should have known that establishing the Garden & Herbarium to the point where it is now - could never have happened so successfully if the momentum was not kept up by some especially dedicated individuals. Pat Gillespie and Yvette van Wijk don't take a break - even with family commitments - the pace does not slow down much at all.

Gardens need constant attention, and in such a hot dry summer extra watering and TLC is a must. Long weekends can have a detrimental effect on the plants that are carefully propagated for use in the Garden, for sale at the Autumn Plant Fair & Spring Wildflower Show, or generally throughout the year. Pat however ensures that they are never neglected and came in almost every day to help fill the gap that was left when some of our permanent Gardeners went on leave. It was during this period that I was able to get to know Pat a little better, and to realise the deep love that she has for plants, and the wildlife that they support. **PLEASE REMEMBER TO SUPPORT VOLUNTEER PLANT SALES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR ON A MONDAY AND THURSDAY BETWEEN 9.00 AND 12.00AM.**

Yvette is quite simply tireless in her on-going attempts to raise money for the Trust, ensuring that the vision for the Garden and Herbarium is realised. Forward planning is creatively and dynamically tackled on a daily basis, so there are endless tasks, activities and challenges ahead of us in 2004.

I feel very fortunate to be able to work in an environment that is so positive, inspirational and relevant.



"The Volunteers" in September 2003. This photo was taken at tea-time to include Sarie Perold (in green bottom right). She came all the way from Pretoria, where she has worked in the NBI PRE Herbarium for years, on the little known Hepatophyta or Liverworts.

Her passion is the Genus Riccia, which are minute moss-like plants growing in an amazing range of conditions. The Riccia she came to see was a little woolly grey thing, found while collecting succulents on Prutkraal Farm in the Great Karoo - see our new succulent collection display (ask Jayne to escort you as it is locked)! This might be a new species of Riccia. It grows in extremely dry conditions but comes to life every time it rains. Other greener Liverworts can be seen in dripping seeps in fynbos Southern slopes or on stream banks.

Some quotes from Jayne:

*"Never underestimate the power of a dream.....And of volunteers!"
Volunteers, Sydney 2000 Olympic games*

*"At the heart of Volunteerism are the ideals of service and solidarity...And the belief we can make the world better."
Kofi Annan - UN Sec General.*

Volunteer Tour Guides - News from Margie Herron - Our campaign to have lots and lots of groups being guided around the Botanical Garden has been having ups and downs.

A big "up" was during the Wildflower Show: we had a group from the local Garden Enthusiasts, and the Kirstenbosch branch of the Botanical Society, who enjoyed a tour of the Garden before coming in to see the Flower Show displays.

Another up was a most enjoyable visit by a group of Americans from Tacoma, Washington state, which is George's "twin city". These folk hadn't come looking for plants, but had a great time all the same.

During this financial year tours brought in well over R1000 - definitely an "up"!!

One of our "downs" was that in spite of excellent publicity, the visitors to the President's Cup were too involved in golf to take up our offer of daily guided walks.

So as not to dwell on the "downs", the group decided to change focus slightly and take up the challenge of naming plants in the Garden. This has proved most stimulating to us, and we are getting feedback that visitors to the Garden enjoy the extra information. When all the plants are named we won't have to worry about that tricky question: "What's this?" (always at the ONE plant one doesn't know) and meanwhile we are exploring ideas about what kind of information people would like to see.

We'd love feedback, so please phone or e-mail Jayne who will pass your ideas on to us.

Special congratulations to Gerry Burger who seems to just scoop up his clients as they wander through the Bot Garden. They have a wonderful tour and are often very generous.

Remember if you have a group looking for an interesting way to spend a morning, guided walks can be arranged, just ask Jayne.

Pat Gillespie writes about the garden & the propagators group –

The garden volunteers are back in full force after their year-end break, and doing a tremendous job of cleaning up plants and repotting ready for the April plant sale. We will have a goodly variety of plants for sale, and also chasmanthe and watsonia bulbs - the watsonias will be those lovely orange/yellow ones that so many people have asked for.

The weeds in the garden are almost overpowering - they grow quicker than our plants - but we are getting on top of them at last.

The rain these last few weeks have been wonderful and the gardens look great, with lots of plants getting ready to flower, and areas that were bare beginning to fill up.

Gerry is busy extending our propagation shed cum nursery to give us a covered area where we can work in inclement weather, especially with the winter months coming on.

See you at the Plant sale on the 3rd April.



Gerry & Pat with the little new (second-hand), red Massey Ferguson Tractor

"Fynbos Colour for Coastal Gardens" by Jane Kelly Crowe, edited Sue Malcomess: a must for all living & gardening on the Garden Route. Not too academic, the paintings are artistically delightful and make one want to grow the plants. Advice and anecdotes are real, fun and useful. At the Plant Sale 3rd April, Jayne will be there signing books.

Lorraine McGibbon reports from GREEN (Garden Route Environmental Education Network), funded by WESSA & housed in the Moriarty Environmental Centre

The end of the year is usually a time of tying up loose ends. Not so the end of 2003. Margaret Herron and I are spent a weekend at Groenfontein near Calitzdorp where we met with a group of teachers from schools in the area. The reason for this, being the writing of a booklet on succulents, specifically for use by teachers in the Little Karoo. A great day was had by all. In December, we met these teachers in Oudtshoorn and gave each of them a draft copy of "Vetplante & Skraal Plante". The teachers are using the booklet this term and we will get feedback from them at the next workshop. The booklet will then be streamlined, prior to printing. We still await news of our funding proposal to CEPF, through SKEP (Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Programme).

Plans for the Schools Environmental Expo 2004 are progressing well. Margaret and I ran a workshop in early February. 21 teachers from 12 George schools attended this meeting. Lots of enthusiasm was generated and I have already had participation forms from 10 schools. The theme this year is "Rivers". The Expo takes place during the week of 10 May. **Visitors are welcome from the 12th – 14th May.**

The Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism (DEAT)'s Adopt-a-Beach programme was piloted by WESSA last year. I will be co-ordinating this awareness programme in the Southern Cape and, at present, have 10 schools and 7 other groups who will be participating. AAB involves fun observations which are carried out regularly at a specific beach. The programme contributes enormously to coastal environmental education and conservation at all levels. Through their ongoing involvement, the group takes over joint responsibility for caring for the coast with the official departments.

Another WESSA project being introduced is the Eco-Schools programme. I have set up meetings with teachers at schools in the Southern Cape. This is an international programme. After successful completion of it, schools get to fly the green and white Eco-School flag. The programme not only increases environmental awareness through activities and curriculum learning, but improves the school environment and builds confidence in the learners.



Nothing stops a determined volunteer! Avril Booth broke her hip a few weeks ago (not in the Bot garden!) and is back here every Monday & Thursday. We always say that volunteering gives you a new lease on life and is good for you!

Gerry Burger writes about the Volunteers - The ladies under the expert guidance of Natalie, are dealing with the ongoing task of pressing and mounting specimens for the Quick Guides while Romary continues in the Main Herbarium. Stina, Stella and Annemarie are engaged in sorting and filing cuttings from magazines for use in the library. Jenny and Natalie are also making headway with the task of scanning in the valuable artwork of Audrey Moriarty.

Charlotta and Rentia, in conjunction with Margie and her Tourguides, have embarked on the mammoth task of identifying and labeling the trees, shrubs and plants in the garden for the benefit of all interested parties.

Don has recovered from his operation and has been very productive making drawers for the Quick Guide section which have doubled its capacity. Other useful items like a more maneuverable tea trolley and a specimen display stand for Jane's office are also on his agenda. Ed has done sterling work on maintenance and upgrading the facilities generally. Several new projects have been lined up for us menfolk and work on these will start soon.

As always it has been very pleasant working with the volunteers and everybody has enjoyed being involved in the various projects.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2004

APRIL 23rd & 24TH – IMITHI – Friday evening talk 6pm - 9am to 4pm Saturday

MAY 7TH & 8TH – IMITHI – Friday evening talk 6pm, 9am to 4pm

MAY 14th, Friday 6pm – MIKE YOUNG – EDEN PROJECT a powerpoint presentation – The Eden Project is the huge plastic-domed display of worldwide biomes in Cornwall, with an amazing South African section

MAY 27th & 28th – BASIC BOTANY/ FLOWER FAMILIES – with Margie Herron in her inimitable style

JUNE 18th & 19th – Friday 6pm talk, Saturday 9am to 4pm PROPAGATING & GROWING FYNBOS Adrian Hanekom

JULY 9TH – Talk on BUTTERFLIES & PLANTS – DAVE EDGE from the Brenton Blue Butterfly Reserve tells us about his fascinating research into the amazing lifestyle of this elusive butterfly

JULY 30th & 31st – TREE ID COURSE – Friday evening talk 6pm & 9am to 5pm Saturday – probably visiting the George forest patches right on our doorstep

AUGUST 28th & 29th – ERICA WEEKEND – TSITSIKAMMA with Connie Smits – Hunting Ericas again, this weekend has become a firm favourite with those lucky enough to have been on it each year! We sleep out at B&B's or whatever, and get to places in 4x4's that few people ever see

SEPTEMBER 25TH & 26TH – SUCCULENT KAROO WEEKEND – details still being planned

OCTOBER 9th & 10th - COASTAL FYNBOS WEEKEND – looking at PACALTS DORP / KLEINKRANTZ / BALLOTS BAY / HEROLD'S BAY

OCTOBER 29TH – RICHARD KUTELA talks about TRADITIONAL HEALERS 6pm

NOVEMBER 13TH – Talk in the morning & then looking at BIRDS IN THE BOT GARDEN during the AFTERNOON and going FROGGING IN THE EVENING! This is not to be missed!

Book with Jayne - Tel/Fax: 044-8741558

In-House training: This year we have a follow-up S A Lottery Board grant to continue with our series of in-house workshops and training sessions for the permanent garden employees in the Botanical Garden. Volunteers are welcome to book a place on these.

Workshops and training sessions include:

Personal financial management; Work ethics & motivation; Labour law; Propagation, Weeding, Watering & Pruning; Equipment maintenance; Basic Botany; Medicinal Plant use & Indigenous Knowledge;

Fitting in all this as well as the normal day to day work in the garden is really tough. Thank you to Michelle & Phumla for help with some of the training. We would like to pay tribute to our permanent gardeners:-

William Mfecane, David Nikelo, Sidney Ngcakane, and Standford Mbewuzana who do a magnificent job in the garden keeping the weeds down, plants cared for and the garden clean - this is no mean feat given that some regular walkers refuse to pick up their doggi-do – then the night visitors, often school learners partying, who leave bottles and plastic containers and much worse! The gardeners have asked me to make a very strong plea to everyone walking a dog to use a poop-scoop, you can get one free from Jayne, made by Margie from recycled plastic coke bottles - and to everyone to use the rubbish bins provided! We really want as many people as possible to enjoy the garden, please help to make this possible?

Jeffery Piet & Willem Cupido have been employed, also with a second Lottery grant, to finish developing the Maze. It does look a mess at the moment, but will gradually take shape and start looking like something soon we hope! The mound meanwhile is really starting to take shape and the medicinal plants are mostly flourishing. Harvesting has started but been delayed because of the lovely, but delaying, rain.

Some interesting Web sites to try: www.nbi.ac.za - rbgkew.org.uk - botany.net - wcapeschool.za - wildnetafrika.com - envirolink.netforchange.com - cspinet.org - scienceinafrica.co.za - biowatch.org.za - protea.worldonline.co.za - capeaction.org.za - naturalistonline.com - wildlifesociety.org.za

DONORS and FUNDING



The **South African Lottery Board** granted us part of what we needed in 2002 / 03 for our Employee Training Project and part for completing the Maze and Mound. In 2004 they have granted us the full amount and we are really thrilled to be able to go ahead full steam and get these two projects under way properly this year.

This grant also allows us to buy some much needed equipment for the garden (see pics below) the little tractor has particularly thrilled the hearts of William and Thornton, and everyone else working in the garden, as we can now collect those unsightly piles of prunings, cuttings, weeds, cut grass, soil, stones, bark chips, etc and move them around the garden with ease.

Once again we must stress that funding is always specifically for certain projects and we cannot use it to buy or do other things. One thing that we still struggle with is funding for full-time permanent labour. Grants are nearly always short term and almost never will include on-going salaries.



You have read Lorraine's write-up about the Conville Expo 2004. Well **S A Breweries** funded this in 2002 & 2003. They then offered to do so for 2004 and 2005 as well!

We are again thrilled at this and have sent off our proposal to them and are still waiting to hear if they will fund the entire amount we need.

This Expo is a really very worthwhile project and has grown in quality so much over the three years it has been held. The learners visit in the mornings during school hours, and we have tried to encourage parents and townspeople to visit in the afternoons. However the response from the public was pathetic to say the least and we thankfully closed up in the afternoons as it is exhausting work.

Everyone with any doubts about abilities and quality of the youth who will be tomorrows leaders – should visit during the morning sessions and perhaps change their minds!



The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), is

a joint initiative of Conservation International, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

“Ensuring an effective role for the Southern Cape Herbarium and Garden Route Botanical Garden in conservation in the southern Cape, South Africa” is the title of our 6 month project. We will be extremely busy networking and work-shopping with all conservation role players in order to achieve this, as well as trying to engage really meaningfully and effectively with local government.

The first of these workshops on the 18th March, will be with people we are already working closely with, and who have representatives on our Management Committee and Board of Trustees. The second which will be on the 22nd April a wider range of initiatives including SKEP, STEP and also environmental consultants etc. We hope to identify which services and resources they do and should need, and how we can better fulfill these needs.

We also hope to show what we can offer, providing we are capacitated to do so - basically by being assured that our services and resources will be paid for in order to be able to support the staff we will need to make these resources available to all who need or should be using them.

The vital importance of Taxonomy and a Herbarium – Taxonomy is the naming and the organisation of organisms; in our case, plants. I am sure everyone will agree, that knowing what the correct names of plants are (or beetles, reptiles, birds for that matter), is absolutely essential in understanding the biodiversity, composition, importance, capacity constraints, conservation worthiness, fragility etc. etc. of any piece of land. Also of course in developing Botanical Gardens.

Taxonomy Cont. from Page 6:

BUT it is also an indisputable fact that Plants are the basis of life and biodiversity on earth - animals including humans, cannot exist without plants. Therefore if you do not have plant taxonomists, there is no need for any other scientists at all!! AND no need to even think about Biodiversity Bills!

We have done a lot of information gathering concerning this problem here and even overseas - the consensus of opinion is that the resources for identifying plant species reliably are disappearing fast. These resources are basically the people who can fulfill this role, the taxonomists, and the research and archived material they need to do their work, the herbarium collections.

South Africa is in a fairly unique position in the world, in that we have still to discover, name and describe, new species - who knows how many!?! It is a fact that new species appear regularly wherever

there is funding and qualified people to look for and recognise them! They even turn up in Botanical gardens!

Therefore everyone needs to understand that our herbaria and gardens are, or should be, developing, growing and vibrant places of excitement and discovery - NOT undervalued and under-funded hidden places or just recreational parks, which seem to be seen as rapidly becoming obsolete in the eyes of decision makers and funders, both in Government and Academia.

This is not only due to the fact that taxonomists are retiring or moving into better paid jobs, and very few younger ones are replacing them, but because Herbaria and their taxonomists are simply not being regarded or factored in as essential to ALL the new "biodiversity" initiatives, and are thus grossly under-funded, under-valued and under-resourced. When everyone inevitably wakes up to the fact that they are needed, it could well be too late!

If the herbaria and their taxonomists are not supported and funded, there can be no final and reliable "..... analysis of the pressures on biodiversity at the level of landscapes, ecosystems, species and genes" . " (November 2003 Newsletter of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan).

Our concern is that the number of capable taxonomists (especially in the Botanical field) is dropping, few younger students are entering this field of study and meanwhile the few presently active taxonomists are getting older or finding better paid jobs, many overseas! Those who retire or die, are not being replaced (look at what is happening at NBI's Compton Herbarium for instance).

Perhaps the reason that few new students are taking this route lies in the fact that the importance of taxonomists is presently grossly under-valued and overlooked. For this reason I guess Botany and Taxonomy are therefore not good career options and hence the dearth of newly trained graduates.

Horticultural training today largely ignores botany and taxonomy; nurseries and garden centres happily label plants with common names, and fight to "register and patent" so called "New" varieties with wonderfully romantic cultivar names. The plants growing somewhere in the wild are completely unaware that they have been "developed" by some smart nurseryman into a brand new and financially hugely rewarding garden fashion statement!

"The National Conservation Assessment will identify priority areas for conservation action, including land outside of protected areas where more detailed assessments will need to be done, and where a range of stakeholders, including private landowners, communities and local authorities will identify sustainable land uses and management options to minimise impacts on important biodiversity areas." (November 2003 Newsletter of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan)

NONE of this is possible unless the plants growing in these areas are identified, plant communities understood, plant / animal interactions and interdependencies known: the cultural relevance of local plants & their and importance to humans, from an indigenous knowledge perspective.

Plants have to be Identified, they have to have NAMES - Botanical taxonomists and Herbaria are therefore absolutely essential. Botanical Gardens display named plants, propagate and rescue endangered plants. They are both vitally important basic resources for the success of biodiversity and conservation strategies.

New News!

We would like to introduce you to some new faces in the Moriarty Environmental Centre; while also giving some news of our IMITHI Amayeza project.

Doreen Court is coming into the Herbarium once a week, though she is sometimes there more often! Doreen wrote the definitive book "Succulent Flora of Southern Africa", the revised edition came out in 2000 which we have in our library. She lectured in Taxonomy at Rhodes University and was largely responsible for getting Yvette started!

We must say thank you once again to Audrey Moriarty for making it possible to have such a well qualified and expert taxonomist in the Southern Cape Herbarium at last.

She is more than fully occupied with the herbarium identifications and organisation, which we have not been able to manage up to now. So she is definitely not available for casual identifications!

However we still welcome people who bring in interesting indigenous plants from their veld and their gardens, but you will still be shown how to do the ID for yourself, so plan to stay an hour or a few and appreciate that this is the only way to learn yourself!

Kholeka Sylvia Zemva has joined us as a trainee horticultural manager. Thanks to Lottery funding which makes this possible. She is a remarkable young woman, with great ambitions and a passion for learning and plants, especially the traditional medicinal plants. At the moment she is doing a little of everything to get the hang of it all!

Sylvia has done the Xhosa translations for our new look signage (Rentia Burger has done the Afrikaans), which will you will see on our plinths soon. She also accompanies Yvette to IMITHI workshops in the local communities as translator, scribe, and to learn more about IMITHI and the plants.

Sylvia writes about the Thembaletu Clinic workshop in February: The purpose of the workshop was to teach people the importance of the medicinal plants. The workshop was given by Yvette and she introduced me, because it was the first time for me to be at a workshop.

Yvette gave us the background of IMITHI and the way the plants were helpful to us before people started to go to clinics and doctors. She taught us that to use IMITHI is a FIRST AID, thereafter we can go to clinics and doctors.

Yvette asked everyone in the workshop to tell us all where they came from, the reason why they were in George and why they are interested in medicinal plants.

We spoke about using medicinal plants:

Cough & cold mixture: we can use onion & brown sugar, we tasted this.

Bad chest, bronchitis: She demonstrated how to use medicinal plants for steaming (kooigoed, mint, wild sage).

Sprains & pains: She showed us practically how to use the medicinal herbs for a soak (comfrey, kooigoed, wild sage). She taught us if we don't have these medicinal plants we can use vinegar. She showed us practically using a hot mixture and a cold water bath to soak the swollen foot.

We learnt about the families of medicinal plants.

We went outside at the back of the clinic to see different types of medicinal plants that are planted there. Yvette & Mofu told us their names and how they are helpful to the people.



Sylvia 2nd from Left, Mofu 2nd from right, at Thembaletu Clinic IMITHI workshop